

SMALL FARM EXPO 2005

Where can Puget Sound-area small farmers and rural landowners go to get the latest information on livestock, crop and resource technologies, land management and more? The Small Farm Expo! While other events around the Northwest cater to the general public, the Small Farm Expo brings together vendors, agencies, and other specialists to provide information and services specifically for agriculturalists and landowners with small-acreage.



On March 19th, the 4th annual Small Farm Expo at the King County Fairgrounds in Enumclaw featured events and activities that connect small-scale land owners and their families with knowledge, practical applications and tools for managing their land. In addition to providing technical resources, this free event showcases local agriculture and increases public awareness about the importance of small farms in our area. Fun activities for children were also available.

Small Farm Expo Priority Goals:

- Provide small-scale producers and landowners with a venue to exchange ideas with specialists in their field.
- Supply rural landowners with in-depth information on land management methods and tools.
- Increase public awareness and appreciation for local agriculture and small-scale farming.

Small Farm Expo 2005 brought more than 1000 people to the King County Fairgrounds, despite a wet morning and a grey day. Attendees had the opportunity to meet specialists in the areas of livestock production, crop production, and landscaping as well as talk with representatives from many different King County and State agencies that provide education to the public. The public also had the chance to attend incredible animal demonstrations including dog agility, sheep herding, goat packing, and pony driving. This year's Small Farm Expo included many hands-on workshops and demonstrations, covering subjects such as composting and horseshoeing.



One of the many shiny antique tractors on display in the Livestock Barn.
Photo L. De Lorenzo



Greg Burdette, a local farrier, shows off the tricks of his trade.
Photo D. Meyer

This year's expo featured several special events.

iMap Demonstration

Attendees had the opportunity to learn about this useful web resource, which is provided by King County. Live demonstrations were offered throughout the day with the help of the 4-H technology van.

Chainsaw Safety and Maintenance Workshop

Tim Curran of Stihl Northwest covered chainsaw operation safety, saw maintenance, and safety gear in this hour-long presentation. Attendees brought their saws and benefitted from hands-on help.

Presentation by Marianne Binetti

A northwest horticultural expert, Marianne has published several books on gardening and has a regular column in the Enumclaw Courier-Herald. Her presentation, "Organizing Your Farm and Outdoor Space" provided a crowd of more than 60 people with information on landscape layout.

December 2005

Putting Tools For Success In The Hands Of Small-Acreage Landowners!

PUBLICITY AND SPONSORSHIP

Event flyers were widely distributed at libraries, community centers, feed stores, and various other public places during the months leading up to the expo and two advertisements were placed in the Enumclaw Courier- Herald. In addition, press releases detailing the highlights of the day were distributed to local and regional newspapers, radio stations, and TV stations. Publicity included pre-event articles in the Capital Press, King County Journal, and the Enumclaw Courier-Herald.

Given that the Small Farm Expo is free to the public, support from our sponsors was essential. This year's sponsors were King County, From the Heart of Washington, Kiwi Fencing, King Conservation District, Pierce Conservation District, Bryant's Tractor and Mower, The 4-H Foundation, WRS Cover-All, Jennings Equipment, USDA Rural Development, and the Enumclaw Courier-Herald. Also important to the success of this event were the hundreds of hours donated by more than 20 volunteers and the help we received from the staff and maintenance team at the King County Fairgrounds.

SUCCESS!

Over 1000 visitors from more than 6 counties took advantage of 14 educational talks, 17 demonstrations, 40 animal displays, and more than 53 vendor booths. Of the attendees that filled out our survey, more than 93% said they would definitely come back to the event next year. 66% said that this event provided them with information they could not easily have gotten elsewhere and 60% said that they would put what they learned to use within the next year. Below are just a few of the positive comments we received from visitors.



Attendees learn about iMap, a web resource provided by King County. Photo D. Meyer

"The variety of vendors and organizations was excellent and impressive. Keep it up."

"I learned about the price of tractors and other farm equipment."

"Every year this Expo gets better!"

"I learned how important it is to keep local agriculture thriving in King County."

"This was a wonderful event and I will definitely spread the word to friends."

-Small Farm Expo Attendee Comments

Initiated by King County in 2002, the Small Farm Expo has grown in attendance every year of its existence. WSU King County Extension, King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks, and the King and Pierce Conservation Districts are committed to the Small Farm Expo for the unique opportunity it provides producers to connect with their community and learn new tools for success.

For more information on the Small Farm Expo, including full program listings from the past two years, visit our webpage at www.metrokc.gov/wsu-ce/farmexpo or call 206-205-3206

Brad Gaolach

Brad Gaolach, Ph. D.
Director
(206) 205-3135
gaolach@wsu.edu

WSU King County Extension
919 SW Grady Way, Suite 120
Renton, WA 98055-2980
<http://www.metrokc.gov/wsu-ce>



Gus the Norwegian Fjord gets a chiropractic adjustment from Jason Henke, a local practitioner. Photo K. Kroha

